



## 2000 Statewide Tourism "Bed Tax" Collections Up

Montana's 2000 tourism "bed tax" collections were up 4% statewide compared to 1999 figures according to the latest report from the Montana Department of Revenue. "Bed tax" collections rose to \$11,093,833 in 2000 compared to \$10,651,365 in 1999.

All of the state's six tourism regions and nine reporting communities saw "bed tax" collection increases for 2000.

"Overall we are very satisfied with the final numbers for the year," says Travel Montana Director Matthew Cohn. "We held our own during the summer and fall months and we believe this is a testament that our marketing efforts to promote the state's attractions beyond the summer season are working." Cohn adds that early snowfall in November and December also boosted visitor numbers at many of the communities adjacent to ski areas. However, he notes some of the state's rural communities that normally have higher numbers in the fall saw a drop in visitation. "The areas that saw a drop in "bed tax" dol-

lars are predominately strong hunting destinations. We heard from quite a few outfitters that believe the fires had a lot to do with the loss of clients."

Missouri River Country reported a 7% increase followed by Glacier and Russell Countries with 6% increases. Gold West Country reported a 4% increase in collections. Yellowstone Country was up 3% and Custer Country increased by 2%.

Missoula led the nine reporting communities with a 10% growth in tourism "bed tax" collections. Helena followed with an 8% increase. Whitefish was up 7%, West Yellowstone increased 6% and Kalispell saw 4% growth. Great Falls was up 5%, Bozeman 4%, Butte reported a 3% increase and Billings had a 2% collection increase.

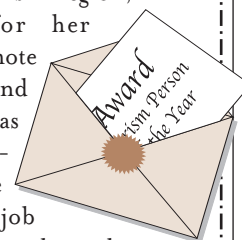
The Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research has forecasted a 2-3 percent increase in nonresident visitation in 2001. Cohn is guardedly optimistic about the coming travel season. He explains that the threat of wildfires, our slowing economy and unpredictable gasoline prices may have an effect on the outcome of our 2001 nonresident numbers.

## The Envelope Please

Governor Judy Martz joined the Montana Tourism Advisory Council in announcing the 2001 Montana Tourism Person and Community of the Year Awards at the March Governor's Conference in Helena. The following are the honored Montanans:

### Tourism Person of the Year

Gayle Fisher, Executive Director of Russell Country tourism region, was recognized for her commitment to promote her tourism region and the state. Fisher was praised for her willingness to go above and beyond her job description to assist the other tourism regions with organizational or marketing efforts.



### Community of the Year

The community of Lewistown was chosen as the Montana Community of the Year. The gem in the heart of Montana was touted for organizing the Charlie Russell Chew-Choo Dinner Train, the Montana Cowboy Poetry Gathering, the Chochecherry Festival and the Lewis and Clark Festival.

The governor and the TAC also awarded two other Montanans with recognition awards.

Jack Clarkson of West Yellowstone was recognized for his ability to cooperatively work with federal agencies to attain a sustainable environment and economy in the West Yellowstone area.

Roy Snyder of Fort Peck was honored for his efforts to develop recreational opportunities in the communities and counties surrounding Fort Peck Lake.

## Did You Know?

- The Montana State University Extension Service's Pollution Prevention Program can help your business conserve energy and water, use less toxic chemicals and reduce, reuse and recycle. For more information on this free, confidential, non-regulatory program call 406-994-3451 or 888-MSU-6872.
- Montana's Boulder River will be featured on "Fly Fishing America" on ESPN 2, Saturday April 7. The program is produced by Barrett Productions in Missoula.
- *Montana The Magazine of Western History*, is celebrating its 50th year of publication.
- Fish, Wildlife & Parks officially changed the name of the Deepdale Fishing Access Site near Townsend to "Yorks Islands Fishing Access Site." The name change recognizes Yorks' contribution to the Lewis and Clark Expedition.
- 2001 marks the 25th anniversary for The Historical Museum at Fort Missoula.
- The International Traditional Games will be held July 26-29, 2001 in Elmo, Montana. If your organization is interested in a traditional games demonstration call 406-675-8782.

## Thanks for Joining Us

A big thanks to everyone who participated in the 2001 Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation in Helena, March 26-27. Travel Montana's staff hopes the conference program was interesting and useful. We really appreciate the support of all the sponsors and exhibitors who helped us provide the conference session and materials. We will see everyone at the 2002 gathering April 18-19 at the West Yellowstone Conference Hotel.

## Online With Travel Montana

Travel Montana will begin distributing the "Update" electronically. If you are interested in receiving this monthly publication online please send your name, business, e-mail address, mailing address and phone number to [update@visitmt.com](mailto:update@visitmt.com) or you may sign up on our Intranet site [www.travelmontana.state.mt.us](http://www.travelmontana.state.mt.us).

## Adding to Our Trophy Case

A number of Travel Montana's marketing campaigns were recently honored with 10 Montana Addy Awards. Wendt Kochman advertising of Great Falls was recognized in the print, direct mail, still photography, video and web banner ad campaign categories, while KHG Advertising of Billings was honored in the poster category. These agencies also received 17 Citations of Excellence for other Travel Montana promotional pieces. In addition

to these new honors, Travel Montana has received over 90 awards for its marketing campaigns over the past 10 years.

## National Tourism Week

May 6-12, 2001 is National Tourism Week. Travel Montana encourages folks around the state to get the word out about how tourism benefits Montana's local and regional economies. Please contact Publicity Coordinator Mary Boyle with your ideas so she can incorporate your activity into the material she provides the state media.

Her number is 406-444-1356 or you can e-mail Mary at [mary@visitmt.com](mailto:mary@visitmt.com).



## Lights, Camera, Action

The Montana Film Office brought back over 200 leads and the grand prize for the best booth from the Locations Global Expo, held in Los Angeles February 23-24. The Old West booth was designed and built by Klaus Mackensen of the Montana Heritage Commission. Montana was represented by Sten Iversen and Bill Kuney of the Montana Film Office, Karlee Smith of the Montana Heritage Commission and Connie Kenney of the Butte CVB and Gold West Country.

## Making Moves at Travel Montana

Travel Montana says goodbye to Publicity/Publications Assistant Susan Albrecht and Administrative Assistant Rose Bond. Susan is now in Bozeman working as the new Executive Director for Yellowstone Country and Rose is taking some rest and relaxation. Good luck Susan and Rose with your new endeavors.

## A Winter "Ad"vantage

The 2001-2002 edition of the Montana Winter Guide is in the works. If you are involved in the state's winter recreation industry and you would like to advertise in the guide, contact Travel Montana's Donnie Sexton at 406-444-2654 for details.

*Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided to disabled persons on request.*

## Calendar of Events

### April

- 20 Roads begin to open at Yellowstone National Park
- 25 Regions and CVB Meeting Helena

### May

- 4-6 Northwest Outdoor Writer's Association Meeting, Kalispell
- 5-9 Pow Wow, Orlando, Florida
- 6-12 National Tourism Week

*For all of the latest Montana tourism industry information log on to Travel Montana's Intranet site:*  
**[travelmontana.state.mt.us](http://travelmontana.state.mt.us)**



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